WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for managing a password in an optical disc apparatus, comprising the steps of:

a) determining if a current optical disc has been reproduced previously by the optical disc apparatus; and

b) requesting a user to enter a first password prescribed by the user if the determining step (a) determines that the current optical disc has been reproduced previously.

2. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

(c) comparing the entered first password with a password prestored in a first area of a memory; and

(d) performing a requested disc operation on the current optical disc if the comparing step (c) result indicates that the entered first password matches the prestored password.

3. The method as set forth in claim 2, wherein the determining step (a) includes:

determining if there exists disc identifier (ID) information stored in the first area of the memory, that corresponds to the current optical disc; and

determining that the current optical disc has been reproduced previously by the optical disc apparatus if the disc ID information exists.

4. The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

(e) requesting the user to enter a unique second password assigned to the current optical disc if the determining step (a) determines that the current optical disc has not been reproduced previously; and

(f) comparing the entered second password with a password stored in a second area of a memory.

5. The method as set forth in claim 4, further comprising:

(g) requesting the user to enter the first password prescribed by the user if the comparing step (f) result indicates that the entered second password matches the stored password; and

(h) storing, in a first area of the memory, the entered first password along with the second password and disc ID information for the current optical disc.

6. The method as set forth in claim 5, further comprising:

(i) performing a requested disc operation on the current optical disc after the storing step (h).

7. The method as set forth in claim 5, wherein one single first password is stored in the first area of the memory in association with multiple optical discs.

8. The method as set forth in claim 5, wherein a plurality of first passwords are associated respectively with a plurality of different optical discs and stored in the first area of the memory.

9. The method as set forth in claim 2, wherein the first area of the memory is a non-volatile storage area of the memory.

10. The method as set forth in claim 4, wherein the second area of the memory is a temporary storage area of the memory.

11. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the first password is a user password.

12. The method as set forth in claim 4, wherein the second password is a disc password unique to the current optical disc.

13. The method as set forth in claim 4, wherein the second password is indicated on a jacket of the current optical disc or is provided over an internet website.

14. A method for managing a password in an optical disc apparatus, comprising the steps of:

a) determining if a current optical disc has been reproduced previously by the optical disc apparatus; and

b) storing disc identifier (ID) information and a disc password for the current optical disc in a non-volatile storage area of a memory if the determining step (a) determines that the current optical disc has not been reproduced previously.

15. The method as set forth in claim 14, further comprising:

(c) performing a requested disc operation on the current optical disc if the determining step (a) determines that the current optical disc has been reproduced previously.

16. The method as set forth in claim 15, wherein the performing step (c) is carried out immediately after the determining step (a) if the determining step (a) determines that the current optical disc has been reproduced previously

17. The method as set forth in claim 14, wherein the determining step (a) includes:

determining if there exists disc identifier (ID) information stored in the non-volatile storage area of the memory, that corresponds to the current optical disc; and

determining that the current optical disc has been reproduced previously by the optical disc apparatus if the disc ID information exists.

18. The method as set forth in claim 14, wherein the storing step (b) includes:

requesting a user to enter a unique disc password assigned to the current optical disc, and

comparing the entered disc password with a password associated with the current optical disc and stored in a temporary storage area of the memory if the determining step (a) determines that the current optical disc has not been reproduced previously.

19. The method as set forth in claim 18, wherein the unique disc password is indicated on a jacket of the current optical disc or is provided over an internet website.

20. A device for managing a password in an optical disc apparatus, comprising:

means for determining if a current optical disc has been reproduced previously by the optical disc apparatus; and

a non-volatile storage area of a memory for storing therein disc identifier (ID) information and a disc password for the current optical disc if the means determines that the current optical disc has not been reproduced previously.